""No entertainment is so cheap as reading, nor any pleasure so lasting" Mary Wortley Montagu

Poem of the Week

'Everyone Sang' by Siegfried Sassoon

Siegfried Sassoon wrote this poem in 1918, probably based on his own experience in the trenches towards the end of the First World War. But reading it now might also suggest parallels with what people have been doing during lockdown.

Everyone suddenly burst out singing;
And I was filled with such delight
As prisoned birds must find in freedom,
Winging wildly across the white
Orchards and dark-green fields; on – on – and out of sight.

Everyone's voice was suddenly lifted;
And beauty came like the setting sun:
My heart was shaken with tears; and horror
Drifted away … O, but Everyone
Was a bird; and the song was wordless, the singing will never
be done.

Give us a pitch…

The story goes that when the screenwriter for Gladiator was asked for a quick resume of his idea, he replied, 'It's about a guy who's trying to get home'.

Here are a few more (answers at the bottom of page)

1. Son tries to get out of the family business. Fails

2. A very plucky day on the beach

3. Upriver, no paddle, the end

4. Guess Who's Coming to Dinner meets Texas Chainsaw Massacre

5. Prima donna of Argentina

Haikus for lockdown

Haikus are Japanese poems that have 3 lines and 17 syllables (5-7-5).
Here are a couple of topical ones. Have a read then have a go.

Covid go away	(5 syllables)
Come again another day	(7 syllables)
Or rather, please don't.	(5 syllables)
'A couple of months	(5 syllables)
inside-- so what's the big deal?'	(7 syllables)
said the prisoner.	(5 syllables)

A moral dilemma: The Mad Bomber

A madman who has threatened to explode several bombs in crowded areas has been arrested. Unfortunately, he has already planted the bombs and they are scheduled to go off very soon. It is possible that hundreds of people may die. He refuses to reveal the location of the bombs. One of his interrogators suggests torture. It would be illegal but the official is sure that it will make the bomber talk in time for you to find and defuse the bombs.

What should you do?

What if you know that the bomber can withstand torture himself, but would talk if you were to torture his innocent wife instead?

Answers

Give us a pitch: 1. The Godfather **2.** Dunkirk **3.** Apocalypse Now **4.** Get Out **5.** Evita

VE Day

Friday 8th May 2020 is the 75th anniversary of the end of the war in Europe after the surrender of Germany to the Allies. A few quiz questions to test your knowledge.

1. The catalyst for the Japanese surrender was the dropping of atomic bombs on two Japanese cities. Can you name them?

2. What event brought the United States into the war and when did it occur?

3. Which country suffered the highest combined losses of soldiers and civilians in the war?

4. Name the leaders of the following countries at the end of WW2: Great Britain, The United States, the Soviet Union

Which war?

Match the films to the wars:

Mash	World War 1
Hurt Locker	World War 2
The Deer Hunter	Korean War
Casablanca	Vietnam War
Birdsong	War in Iraq & Afghanistan

War Books

1. A graphic memoir about the Holocaust with animal characters including Nazi cats and Jewish mice

2. A sci fi novel about the bombing of Dresden and a repeated catchphrase 'and so it goes'

3. The horrors of the First World War from the point of view of a horse

4. A child's experience of life in a Japanese internment camp in Shanghai

5. The central character is Liesel Meminger but the book is narrated by Death (by Markus Zusak)

6. The novel that gave us the phrase for being caught in an impossible situation (now sometimes used about IPP sentences)

Answers

VE Day 1. Hiroshima and Nagasaki **2.** Bombing of Pearl Harbour, Dec 7, 1941 **3.** Soviet Union (est. 20-27 million) **4.** Winston Churchill, Harry Truman, Joseph Stalin

War books: 1. Maus **2.** Slaughterhouse Five **3.** War Horse **4.** Empire of the Sun **5.** The Book Thief **6.** Catch 22

Which war?
Mash = Korean War
Hurt Locker = War in Iraq & Afghanistan
The Deer Hunter = Vietnam War
Casablanca = World War 2
Bridsong = World War 1